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The Unicorn Tapestry / another poem

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THE UNICORN TAPESTRY

by Lawrence Schimel

I greeted him without looking up from my loom. He was still waiting on the threshold when I finally did. "Sit down," I instructed, indicating a cushion. "What is it you wish of me?"

"I wish to know the manner of my death. A woman in town told me to come to you."

"Why do you wish to know this?"

"I am a warrior. If my death is to come at the hands of another man, I would like to know who he is and slay him first."

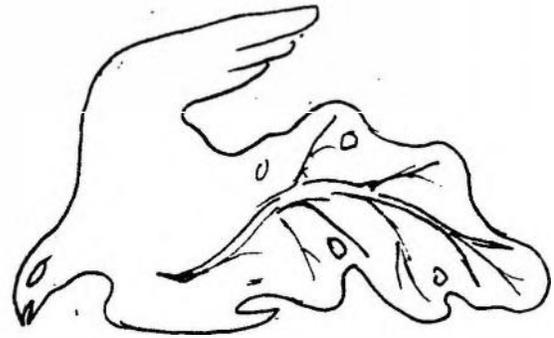
I waited a while before giving my answer, musing on what he had just told me. "I must weave a tapestry. On it you will see your death. But to make the tapestry I will need certain materials, which you must somehow obtain. First bring me some hair from the mountain goats which live in the land above the clouds."

He left and I continued my weaving.

Goat hair, Manticore manes, threads from the tails of Pegasi, rare orchid dyes, and ruby and gold threads. All these he brought me and more.

But a moment ago he dropped off another item and has just left in search of the last, a lock of hair from the Elf-king's daughter. he is by now entering the outskirts of the town when I wake from my trance and thread my loom. I weave the tapestry from the materials he has brought me and the work goes quickly. Soon I have finished and I take it off the loom and hang it on the wall of my cave.

It shows the warrior, holding a lock of golden hair, run through by a unicorn's horn.



gary barwin is not, to our knowledge, a teenager - but he definitely hails from Canada!

another poem

a rabbi, a schoolboy and a tailor walk into a bar. both the rabbi and the tailor order a drink, but the schoolboy tells this story. he says:

imagine yourself to be a leaf.
imagine yourself to be turning gold.
the sound of your hands as they move thru water.
the sound of your feet walking on dry land
once when i was 17 i did not do my homework
i became a leaf on a tree in a shopping centre
i became a discount store.

*

on tuesday i was selling shoes
video tapes, german sausage
small pictures of bermuda.
when suddently a tall blue bird was born from my
shoulderblades
as if i was a pocket calculator counting the sky
i became light as a five or a six, carried by air
i was a leaf turning onto a highway from a street in
the suburbs
i was a blood cell spinning in the veins of my tongue

i read the menu out loud, pronouncing each word
like the balloons that flew over us at my 12th birthday
party
the wind picked up
signals from jupiter
and a rock that was on my chest
became a family of four then a group of stars in the
constellation orion.

i never wanted to become immortal but it came to
me so clearly
i parked my car behind loblaws and knew i would
never die

-- gary barwin

("Loblaws" is a Canadian grocery store chain)